

MEMOIRS OF LITERATURE.

MONDAY, February 25. 1712.

*AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT of the Life and Trial
of MICHAEL SERVETUS. In several Letters to ****.*

* Letter V.

SIR,

I Have already informed you, that the Magistrates of Geneva ordered *Calvin* to extract several Propositions out of *Servetus's* Book, entitled *Christianismi Restitutio*. Pursuant to that Order, *Calvin* went immediately about it, and reduced those Propositions to XXXVIII. Articles. The Title prefixed to them runs thus. "Sententiae, vel Propositiones, excerptae ex Libris Michaelis Serveti, quas Ministri Ecclesiae Genevensis partim impias, & in Deum blasphemas; partim profanis erroribus & deliriis refertas esse assertant; omnes vero a Verbo Dei & Orthodoxæ Ecclesiae consensu prouersus alienas".

Those Propositions have been printed among *Calvin's* Theological Tracts; and therefore, Sir, I need not give you an Account of them. I shall only observe that *Calvin* might have left out some, that are far from being so heretical as others.

Servetus answered those Articles; and his Answer may be seen likewise among the Tracts above-mentioned. It begins thus. "Eam sibi jam authoritatem arrogat *Calvinus*, ut instar Magistrorum Sorbonicorum Articulos scribat, & quidem pro sua libidine damnet, nullam penitus

* The IVth Letter may be seen in the IVth Sheet of this Second Volume.

" ex Sacris adducens rationem. Mentem meam ipse aut plane non intelligit, aut callide alio detorquet. Unde cogor scopum meum totum hic paucis proponere, ac pro me rationes adducere, antequam singulis ejus Articulis respondeam.

" Scopus meus totus fuit quod nomen hoc *Filius* in sacris literis propri tribuatur homini filio, idque semper, sicut eidem proprie semper trahitur nomen *Iesus*, & nomen *Christus*. Ad hujus probationem adduxi omnes Scripturæ locos, in quibus ponitur ea vox *Filius*, quæ semper sumitur pro homine filio. Nullum dico in Evangelii posse inveniri locum, in quo ponatur ea vox *Filius*, quæ non accipiatur pro homine filio. Si igitur Scriptura ita semper accipit, ita & nos semper accipere oportet.

" Sectundam Personam in Deitate dixi olim dictam Personam, eo quod esset Personalis Repræsentatio hominis Iesu Christi, hypostatice jam olim in Deo subsistentis, ac in ipsa Deitate visibiliter reluentis. Quia vero hæc Personæ ratio est Calvinus incognita, & quia inde res fere tota pendet, locos his ex antiquis Ecclesiæ Doctoribus adducam".

Here *Servetus* quotes several Passages out of *Tertullian*, St. *Irenæus*, and the *Recognitions* falsely ascribed to St. *Clement*; and then adds :

" Jam ad singulos Calvini Articulos respondere supereft.

" In ipso cum primis titulo mirari subit hominis impudentiam, qui se Orthodoxum prædicet, cum sit Simonis Magi discipulus (*Servetus meant that Calvin was a zealous Assertor of the Doctrine of Predestination*) ut in Apologia mea jam evidenter ostendi. Quis Orthodoxum dicat Ministrum Ecclesiæ, accusatorem criminalem & homicidam?

I should have been guilty of a great Omission, had I not inserted this Passage of *Servetus*, since it contains the Substance of his Heresy, delivered in his own Words. He proceeds, in the next place, to answer the several Articles of *Calvin*; for which I refer you, Sir, to the Book above-mentioned.

Servetus's Answer was very short. *Calvin* made a Reply *, consisting of twenty four Pages in Folio, written in a pretty large Letter, and entitled: *Brevis Refutatio errorum & impietatum Michaelis Serveti a Ministris Ecclesiæ Genevensis magnifico Senatui, sicuti jussi fuerant, oblata*.

That Reply is written with great Art, and plainly shews that *Calvin* was a Man of excellent Parts. He concludes that Piece with these Words. " Quisquis ergo vere & prudenter reputabit, hunc illi (*Serveto*) scopum fuisse agnoscat, ut luce sanæ doctrinæ extincta totam religionem everteret ". This Accusation appears to me altogether groundless. Whoever undertakes to overthrow all Religion, has no Religion at all; but the reading of *Servetus's Works*, and his whole Conduct, are sufficient to

* It has been inserted amongst *Calvin's Works*. See his *Confutation of Servetus*.

convince any one, that he was fully persuaded of the Truth of the Revelation. He was an Heretick, extremely fond of his new Doctrine ; he maintained his Opinions with great Heat ; he was very imprudent, and used the most offensive Words ; he behaved himself like a Madman in his Confinement. Such was the Character of *Servetus* ; but I think it cannot be said with any shew of Reason, that he designed to destroy all Religion.

That Physician made no Answer to *Calvin's Reply*, being contented to write some Notes in the Margin of that Writing, and to insert several injurious Words between the Lines, *viz.* *Mentiris* (a). *Simo Magus*. *Impostor*. *Sycophanta*. *Nebulo*. *Perfidus*. *Impudens*. *Ridiculus mus*. *Cacodæmon*. &c. One of the marginal Notes was expressed in these Words : *In causa tam justa sum constans, & mortem nihil formido*.

Calvin's Reply was signed by him, and Thirteen other Divines ; which moved *Servetus* to write the following Words next to their Subscriptions. " *Hactenus* (b) *est satis conclamatum, & magna subscriptentium hic turba*. *Sed quos locos isti adducunt ad statuendum invisibilem illum, & realiter distinctum Filium, quem asserunt?* *Nulos sane adducunt, nec adducent unquam*. *Hoc decebat tantos eloquii divini ministros, qui & ubique jactant se nihil velle docere, quod non sit solidis Scripturæ locis demonstratum*. *At nulli tales loci nunc inveniuntur*. *Improbata est igitur doctrina mea solis clamoribus, ratione vero nulla, auctoritate nulla*.

" *Michael Servetus subscribit, solus hic quidem, sed qui Christum habet Protectorem certissimum*".

At the very same time *Servetus* sent a Latin Letter (c) to *Calvin*, (I think they are the last Lines he writ,) wherein he accuses him of not knowing the Principles of Things, of being ignorant of this great Principle, *Omnis actio fit per contactum*. Lastly, he says that *Calvin* maintains without any Reason, that the Law of the Decalogue is still in force.

Tho *Servetus* was a Man of a fiery Temper, I can hardly believe he would have been so imprudent as to abuse *Calvin* in the most shameful manner, whilst he was under Confinement, had he not been advised to it by some Enemies of that Reformer. The thing appears to me undeniably ; and I shall quote Three Passages that will put it out of all doubt. 1. I find these Words in a Letter of *Calvin* to *William Farel*, dated October 26. " *Cæsar* (d) *comicus* (*one of the Magistrates, whom he calls so*) si-

(a) *Valentinus Gentilis* was more prudent than *Servetus*; for being imprisoned at Geneva, in 1558. for his Heretical Doctrine, and prosecuted by *Calvin*, he call'd that Reformer *Eximium Dei Ministrum & summum Theologum. Explicat. Perfid. Val. Gentil.* among *Calvin's Theological Tracts*, pag. 923. Ed. Genev. 1576.

(b) This Passage was never before printed.

(c) I have neglected to transcribe that Letter.

(d) This Letter, and others of *Calvin*, which I shall quote hereafter, have been printed.

" mulato per triduum morbo, in Curiam tandem ascendit, ut sceleratum
" istum (*Servetum*) poena eximeret. Neque enim erubuit petere, ut
" cognitio ad ducentos veniret : sine controversia tamen damnatus est".

It appears from this Passage that the Magistrate, call'd *Cæsar comicus* by *Calvin*, was a Friend of *Servetus*, and used his utmost Endeavours to save his Life. 'Tis not improbable that the Council of Two Hundred would have acquitted that Heretick.

2. Here follows a second Passage out of *Calvin's Life* (a) written by *Beza*.

" Fuit autem horum omnium (certa-
" minum) iste exitus, ut tandem perditus ille (*Servetus*) (cui etiam factio-
" forum (b) unus tum Prætoris Assessor in aurem insusurrasse quiddam
" credebatur, quo malum perdi hominis animum obfirmaret) a vana il-
" la sua confidentia proditus, impietatis & infinitarum blasphemiarum ex-
" omnium etiam Helveticarum Ecclesiarum sententia damnatus, XXVII.

" Octob. nullo edito poenitentiæ signo infoelix vivus cremaretur".

3. I have found under this Passage of *Beza*, in the Edition mention'd by me in the Margin, a Note written by a Minister (c) of *Geneva* in the XVIth Century, and expressed in these Words.

" Accepi a certo homine non
" defuisse tum ex præcipuis juris dicundi Præfectis, qui ut malum animum
" in Calvinum per Hispanum reum exerenter, auctores essent reo, ut
" atrocia quæque in Calvinum proferret, quod hoc ipsum apud certos
" gratiosiorem redditum esset: Illum autem abreptum a malo spiritu
" blasphemias profudisse in Domini Nostri veritatem atrociores : unde
" sibi ipse tanto certius periculum certe Dei judicio conflaverit".

It plainly appears from these three Passages, that *Servetus* was set against *Calvin* by some considerable Men of *Geneva*. They made him believe they would save his Life ; but it appeared by the Event that it was not in their Power. I am apt to think that *Servetus* would have made a better Defence by word of Mouth and in Writing, had he not been supported by *Calvin's* Enemies.

The Magistrates of *Geneva*, being sensible that the Trial of that Physician was a thing of the highest Consequence, did not think fit to give Sentence, without consulting the Magistrates of the Protestant Cantons of *Switzerland*. They sent to them *Servetus's* Book printed at *Vienne*, and also the Writings of *Calvin*, and the Prisoner's Answers ; and at the same time desired to have the Opinion of their Divines about that Affair.

The Magistrates of *Zurich* answered that they had consulted their Ministers ; and intreated the Council of *Geneva* to oppose strenuously *Ser-*

(a) I make use of the First Edition, prefixed to *Calvin's Letters*. Geneva, 1575.

(b) By those Factious Men, *Beza* means *Calvin's* Enemies.

(c) I think his Name was *Perron*.

Servetus's Heresy. “ Being (*a*) fully persuaded, (*say they*) that you will not suffer the wicked Intention of your Prisoner to have its Effect, since it is altogether contrary to the Christian Religion, and occasions a great Scandal”. Their Letter is dated *October 2.* The Zurich-Divines expressed themselves more fully. “ We (*b*) are of Opinion (*say they*) that great Diligence ought to be used against him (*Servetus*) ; especially since our Churches are suspected of Heresy, in Foreign Countries, and of favouring Hereticks. The Divine Providence has therefore afforded us an Opportunity of clearing our selves from such a Suspicion, if you take care to prevent the further spreading of that Man’s pestiferous Doctrine. We do not doubt, but that you will do it. May the Lord Jesus bestow upon you Wisdom and Courage, and shew you the right way of doing his Will, to the Glory of his Name, and the Preservation of the Church, and the Christian Faith”. This Letter bears the same Date.

The Council of *Schafhausen* answered the 6th of *October*, That they had referred the Examination of that Affair to their Ministers, whose Opinion they might know by their Letter. Those Divines, having expressed their Abhorrence for *Servetus's Errors*, conclude with these Words. “ Nor (*c*) do we doubt, but that, through your great Prudence, you will oppose his Design, and hinder his Blasphemies from preying any longer upon the Members of Christ. For to pretend to answer his Extravagancies by long Arguments, would be acting madly with a Madman”. They add, That they subscribe to the Judgment of the *Zurich* Divines.

As for what concerns the Magistrates of *Basil*, they answered in a few Words, that they had left that Affair to the Consideration of their Divines. Their Answer is dated *October 12.* The Ministers of *Basil*, in a Letter bearing the same Date, testify their Abhorrence for *Servetus's He-*

(*a*) En confiance que ne laisserez venir en avant la meschante & fausse intention de votre dit Prisonnier, laquelle est totalement contraire à la Religion Chrestienne, & donne de grands scandales & assaults.

(*b*) Multa ergo fide & diligentia contra hunc (*Servetum*) opus esse judicamus ; præser-tim cum Ecclesiæ nostræ apud Exteros male audiant, quasi hæreticæ sint, & hæreticis fa-veant. Obtulit vero in præsenti sancta Dei providentia occasionem repurgandi vos simul ac nos a prava mali hujus suspicione ; si videlicet vigilantes fueritis, diligenterque caveri-tis ne veneni hujus contagio per hunc serpat latius. Id quod facturos A. V. nil dubitamus. Dominus Jesus Christus conferat pietati vestræ sapientiam & fortitudinem, viam, rationem & modum justum faciendi voluntatem ejus, ad gloriam nominis ipsius, & ad fidei sincera Ecclesiæque fidelem conservationem.

(*c*) Neque dubitamus quin vos pro insigni prudentia vestra ipsius conatus repressuri sitis, ne blasphemiae ipsius tanquam cancer latius depascantur Christi membra. Nam longis rati-onibus evertere ipsius deliramenta, quid aliud esset quam insaniente insanire? This Letter is also dated October 6.

refy,

resy, and then add : " Lastly (a), We exhort you to use your utmost Endeavours to reclaim him , provided the Scandal he has occasioned may be removed. But if he continues to be incurable, let him be so restrained, (as it is your Duty, and according to the Power you have received from the Lord), that, for the time to come, he may do no Harm to the Church of Christ, lest the End should prove worse than the Beginning. To that End, the Lord himself will give you his Spirit, and Strength, and Wisdom, &c.

The Magistrates of *Berne* answered, That they had consulted their Divines, and desired the Magistrates of *Geneva* to prevent the Progress of Errors. " We (b) desire you, (say they), not doubting that you are inclined to it, to take care that such Errors, or the like, be not sowed in the Church of Jesus Christ our only Saviour ; by which means you will preserve her from Trouble and Adversity , and promote the Glory of God (c). The Ministers of *Berne* expressed themselves in these Words : " We (d) pray God, that he would be pleased to give you the Spirit of Prudence, Wisdom, and Courage, that you may remove this Evil not only from your own Church, but also from all others, and do nothing that is unworthy of Christian Magistrates ". That Letter is only dated in the Year 1553 (e).

When *Servetus* was imprisoned , *Calvin* writ a Letter (the 20th of August) to his Friend *William Farel*, Minister of the Church of *Neufchatel*, whereby he acquainted him with it, " We (f) are now engaged (says he)

(a) Postremo, quod Servetum attinet, hortamur ut quod facere vos oportet, omne studium in ipso sanando adhibeatis, modo quæ excitavit offendicula, & ipsa sanari queant. Verum si insanabilis in concepta semel perversitate persistet, sic pro officio vestro, potestateque a Domino concessa coeretur, ne dare incommodum queat deinceps Ecclesiae Christi, neve fiant novissima primis deteriora. Quia in re suppeditabit Dominus ipse Spiritum, robur & sapientiam, &c.

(b) Vous prions, comme ne doutons point à ce être enclins, de toujours tenir main quelles erreurs & sectes, comme les dites sont , ou semblables , ne soient semées en l'Eglise de Jesus Christ nostre seul Sauveur ; & par ce garderez de trouble & adversité , & sa gloire avancerez & augmenterez.

(c) If I am not mistaken, that Letter was dated October 6.

(d) Oramus Dominum ut det vobis Spiritum prudentiæ, consilii & fortitudinis, ut & pestem hanc ab Ecclesiis cum vestra tum aliis avertatis, & simul nihil admittatis, quod Magistratui Christiano inconveniens censeri possit.

(e) The Four Letters of the Divines of Switzerland have been printed among those of Calvin, pag. 116. & seq. of the Geneva Edition. 1575.

(f) Jam novum negotium habemus cum Serveto. Hac transire forte cogitabat. Nec dum enim seitur quo consilio venerit. Sed cum agnitus fuisset, retinendum putavi. Nicolaus meus ad capitale judicium, poenæ talionis se offerens, ipsum vocavit. Quadragesima accusationis capita postridie in medium scripta attulit. Tergiversatus est initio. Itaque vocati sumus. Proterve mihi convictatus est, non secus ac si haberet sibi obnoxium. Ego,

" he) with *Servetus*. Perhaps he only designed to go through this City ;
 " for we don't know yet what Reason moved him to come hither. He
 " has been discovered, and I have been of Opinion that he should be
 " arrested. He is prosecuted by *Nicolas* (*de la Fontaine*), who brought the
 " next day Forty (a) Heads of Accusation against him. At first he va-
 " ried in his Answers ; and therefore I was sent for to Court. He
 " abused me, as if I had been his Inferior. I have treated him, as he
 " deserves. At last the Magistrates have declared that all the Articles
 " have been proved against him. *Nicolas* was set at Liberty three Days
 " after ; and on the Fourth he was acquitted, my Brother being Security
 " for him. — I hope *Servetus* will be condemned to Death ; but I
 " wish the Severity of the Punishment may be softened.

Farel answered *Calvin* in a Letter dated October 8. " Tis a wonderful
 " Providence, (says he) that *Servetus* should come to *Geneva*. I wish he
 " may repent, tho never so late. It will be a mighty thing, if he dies
 " a true Penitent, undergoing but one Death, tho he deserves to die a
 " thousand times ; and if he endeavours to edify the Spectators, having
 " made it his Business to pervert many People that are dead, and others
 " that are still living, and even those that shall be born hereafter. The
 " Judges must be very cruel, and perfect Enemies of Christ and his
 " Church, if they are not affected with the horrid Blasphemies with
 " which that pernicious Heretick attacks the Divine Majesty, and en-
 " deavours to overthrow the Gospel, and to corrupt all the Churches.
 " But I hope that those, who are commended for inflicting a just Punish-
 " ment upon Thieves and sacrilegeous Persons, will do their Duty in this
 " Case, by taking off a Man, who has so long and so obstinately
 " persisted in his Heresy, and undone so many People. In desiring that
 " the Severity of the Punishment should be moderated, you act the Part
 " of a Friend towards a Man, who is your great Enemy. But I beseech
 " you to behave your self in such a manner, that no one may be so bold
 " for the time to come as to publish new Doctrines, and occasion so much
 " Disturbance, as this Man has done (b)". It appears from this Passage
 that *Farel* was a violent Divine ; which is altogether contrary to the Spi-
 rit

ut dignus erat, eum excepti. Tandem pronunciavit Senatus capita omnia probata esse. Di-
 missus est e carcere Nicolaus die tertio, cum fratrem meum sponsorem dedisset, quarto ab-
 solutus est. — Spero capitale saltem fore iudicium : poenæ vero atrocitatem remitti cupio.
Calvin. Epist. pag. 114. Genov. 1575.

(a) He should have said XXXVIII.

(b) Mira est Dei dispensatio in Seryeto, quod istuc venerit. Utinam vel sero sapiat.
 Magnum sane miraculum erit, si mortem perferat serio ad Deum conversus, & occumbens
 una morte (qui multas myriadas commeritus est) si omnes contendat ædificare præsentes,
 qui multis iam sublatis & qui supersunt, adde etiam venturis nocere studuit. Valde cru-
 deles erunt, & admodum injurii Christo, & doctrinæ pietatis, & veri Ecclesiæ hostes Judi-
 ces

rit of Christianity. (*See the Margin* (*)). Farel adds, that he has frequently offer'd to suffer Death, in Imitation of St. Paul, if he taught any thing contrary to the Gospel-Doctrine, and that he has declared he should deserve the greatest Punishment, if he should bring off any body from the Faith and Doctrine of Jesus Christ. I leave it to you, Sir, to make your Observations upon these Letters, and I am, &c.

ces, si non moveantur blasphemis horrendis tam nefandi Hæretici, quibus divinam majestatem impetrat, & Christi Evangelium conatus est labefactare, omnesque corrumperet Ecclesiæ. Sed spero Deum facturum, ut qui laudantur ob justas inficias furibus & sacrilegis pœnas, ita se gerant, ut in hac parte merito bene audiant, sublati eo, qui tandem obstinatissime in hæresibus perseveravit, quique tam multos perdidit. Quod pœnae atrocitatem leniri cupis, facis amici officium in inimicissimum tibi hominem. Sed te, quæso, ita geras, ne temere quivis audeat nova inferre in publicum dogmata, & tandem omnia turbare impune, ut iste fecit. *Ubi supra pag. 146.*

(*) And when his Disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command Fire to come down from Heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But, he turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come TO DESTROY MENS LIVES, BUT TO SAVE THEM. Luke IX. 54, — 56.

L E I P S I C K.

A Posthumous Piece of Dr. Ittigius has been lately publish'd by M. Ludovicus. *Thomæ Ittigii, Theol. D. & Dioecesis Lipsiæ Superintendent, Schedijsma de autoribus, qui de Scriptoribus Ecclesiæ egerunt, cura L. Christiani Ludovici, P. P. cuius Auctarium & Annotationes accidunt. Lipsiæ, 1711. in 8vo.*

P A R I S.

M. de Prépetit de Grammont, late Rector of the University of Paris, and Professor Emeritus of Eloquence, has translated into French Verse the Poetical Art of Horace, and some other Pieces of that Ancient Poet.

Traduction en Vers Francoise de l'Art Poétique d'Horace, des Satyres IV. & X. de son premier Livre, & de la I Epître de son Livre II. &c. Paris 1711. in 12o.

This Book consists of Three Parts. The First, besides the Translation of the Poetical Art of Horace, and of the Three Pieces mentioned in the Title, contains also a Version of several remarkable Passages in the best Poets. The Author's Poetry is neat

and elegant; and his Notes are well chosen. The Second Part is a very instructive Dissertation upon the Ancient and Modern Authors. The Third contains a very exact and compleat Treatise of the French Versification.

THE Vth Volume of the History of the Church, by the Abbot de Choisy is newly come out.

Histoire de l'Eglise, par M. l'Abbé de Choisy. Tome Cinquième, depuis l'an 840. jusqu'à l'an 1100. Paris. 1712. in 4to. pag. 436.

M. Roy has obtained the Prize of Eloquence for the Year 1711. The Subject, proposed by the French Academy, was this, God is the Protector of those who trust in him. That Illustrious Society has publish'd M. Roy's Discourse, and some of the best Pieces of Eloquence made upon the same Subject.

Recueil de plusieurs Pièces d'Eloquence présentées à l'Academie Francoise, pour le Prix de l'année 1711. avec plusieurs discours qui ont été prononcés dans l'Academie, & quelques Pièces de Poésie qui y ont été lues en différentes occasions. Paris. 1711. in 12. pag. 431.